

burnoutdoors?

FOLLOW THE RULES

CALL BEFORE YOU BURN



OUTDOOR BURNING RULES FOR SPOKANE COUNTY

Outdoor Burning Rules for Spokane County



This brochure is a cooperative effort by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the Spokane Regional Clean

Air Agency, along with our fire district partners. Each of these agencies is involved in outdoor burning programs in Spokane County.

The focus of this brochure is on three types of outdoor burning: residential yard and garden debris disposal fires, silvicultural (forest) debris disposal fires, and recreational fires.

The only material that may be burned in Washington State is natural vegetation, and only under specific program requirements.

The type of natural vegetation you wish to burn and where you live determines whether or not you can burn and what rules apply.

In an effort to reduce the harmful effects of breathing smoky air, our state legislature called for the gradual reduction and/or elimination of outdoor burning across the state, beginning in 1991. Now, outdoor burning is limited to outlying areas of the county that are less populated and have fewer commercially available alternatives to burning. Burning is not allowed in any of Spokane County's 13 incorporated cities, towns and their Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).

Burning is still a useful tool for forest landowners to remove hazardous fuels and restore forest health. Landowners should exercise caution and follow burn rules and permits conditions to avoid escapement and creating a smoke nuisance.

The type of natural vegetation you wish to burn and where you live determines whether or not you can burn and what rules apply.

Burning responsibly is the best way to prevent unwanted wildfires and thousands of dollars in suppression costs. Escaped debris burns are a leading cause of wildfires in the state of Washington. This brochure is full of information and tips to help you burn safely and legally.

Step 1 Determine the type of burning you may do

RESIDENTIAL YARD AND GARDEN DEBRIS

is comprised of leaves, needles, small tree/shrub prunings, and other natural yard and garden waste originating on residential improved property.

Go to Step 2

SILVICULTURAL DEBRIS

consists of trees, stumps, limbs, needles, etc., generated on unimproved property.

Go to Step 2

RECREATIONAL

includes outdoor camp/cooking fires, backyard barbecues, chimneas, and other patio/deck warmers.

See pages 7 and 8

OTHER

If you are interested in other types of burning rules, such as agricultural or land clearing, call the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency at **(509) 477-4727**

Step 2 Determine where you will be burning

IMPROVED PROPERTY OUTSIDE THE NO BURN AREA FOR RESIDENTIAL YARD AND GARDEN DEBRIS

You may burn residential yard and garden debris generated on your improved property on designated dates each April if you live outside the No Burn Area and Urban Growth Areas.

Improved property refers to the maintained area within about 30 feet of a residence, which may consist of a lawn that is watered/mowed 2-3 times per week. The area may have a few trees, shrubs, or other vegetation planted as part of a designed landscape around the house.

See pages 3-6

UNIMPROVED PROPERTY OUTSIDE URBAN GROWTH AREAS

You may be eligible to burn silvicultural debris on unimproved property that is outside of urban growth areas on DNR-protected lands.

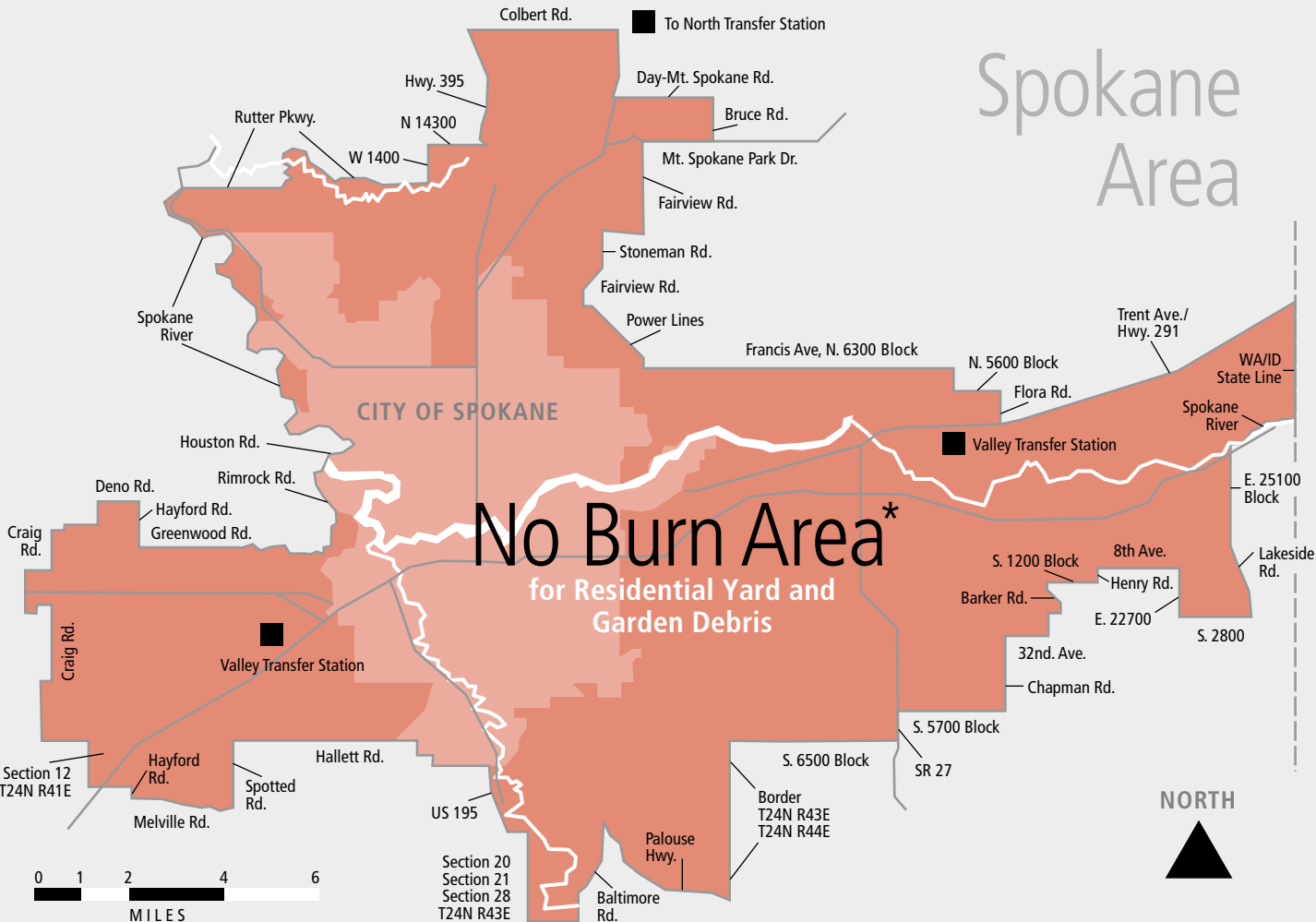
Unimproved property is the area beyond your improved property, such as lands that are not irrigated, mowed, or otherwise maintained. This includes timbered pastures, brush lands, scrub forests, and forests. Burning silvicultural debris on unimproved property falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources.

See pages 9 and 10

Do You Live Within the No Burn Area for Residential Yard and Garden Debris Burning?

If you live close to the No Burn Area call the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency at (509) 477-4727, for assistance in determining if your property is in or out of the No Burn Area.

Spokane County Fire Districts # 2, 5, 11, and 12 have delegated yard and garden debris burning programs. If you reside within one of these districts, contact them directly for program rules and permit information.



No Burn Area for Residential Yard and Garden Debris Burning

* Residential Yard and Garden Debris Burning is also prohibited in these cities/towns and Urban Growth Areas:

- ▶ Airway Heights
- ▶ Cheney
- ▶ Deer Park
- ▶ Fairfield
- ▶ Latah
- ▶ Liberty Lake
- ▶ Medical Lake
- ▶ Millwood
- ▶ Rockford
- ▶ Spangle
- ▶ Spokane
- ▶ Spokane Valley
- ▶ Waverly

Outdoor burning is banned on Fairchild Air Force Base.

Note: This map is an approximation. If your property line is close to the boundary, call Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency (509) 477-4727 prior to burning to ensure that you live outside of the No Burn Area for residential yard and garden debris burning.

Residential Yard & Garden Debris Burning

Choose a healthier and safer way to handle your natural debris. **Alternatives can be found on page 5.**

APRIL						
S	M				F	S
S	M				F	S

Burning residential yard and garden debris outside the No Burn Area is allowed on eight designated days each April, typically over the first two weekends in April, Friday through Monday.

Material may not be hauled from another site to burn.

Burning is not allowed for commercial purposes.

The fire must be guarded with water, such as a charged hose, pails, or wet sacks. The fire must be attended at all times by a person capable of extinguishing it quickly.

Natural vegetation to be burned should be as dry as possible. This can be accomplished through proper preparation: rake material into small piles and cover material to protect from moisture until ready to burn.

Only one pile may be burned at a time. The pile may be no larger than three feet in diameter and two feet high.



Burn only between 9 am and 5 pm. Completely extinguish the fire. Never leave a fire unattended!

Burning of any material, except natural vegetation from improved property, is prohibited.



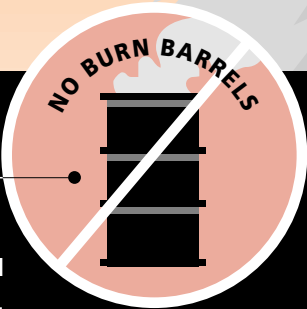
Hand tools should be readily available to extinguish the fire if necessary. Have the number of your local fire department available and call immediately if a fire gets out of control.

An open fire must be on a non-combustible surface and at least 50 feet from combustible objects (buildings, fences, etc.). Fire breaks must be made around the open fire.

50 FEET OR MORE AWAY

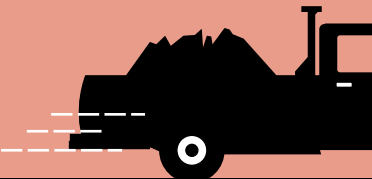
3 FEET WIDE

Burn barrels are prohibited in all areas of Washington State.



SAFER ALTERNATIVES TO YARD AND GARDEN DEBRIS BURNING

Haul it



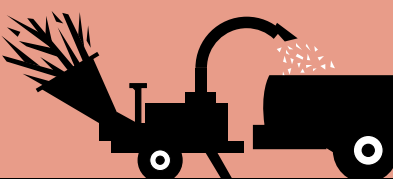
- ▶ Rake up your excess material and haul it to your nearest Recycling/Transfer Station in Spokane County. Call the Recycling Hotline for locations, hours and rates: (509) 625-6800.
- ▶ Some private businesses that offer pick-up and hauling services are listed in the Yellow Pages under "landscape/lawn."
- ▶ For a list of Spokane-area businesses that haul and dispose of natural vegetation, call the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, (509) 477-4727; or visit www.spokanecleanair.org.

Compost it



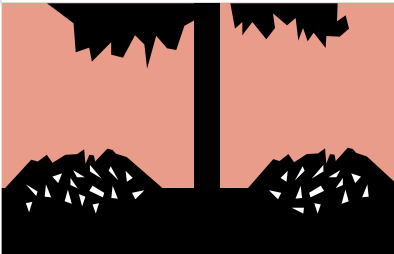
- ▶ Composting yard and garden waste protects our air, land, and water resources while providing a rich garden fertilizer.
- ▶ "How to Compost" workshops are held free for the public throughout the year.
- ▶ For workshop dates and locations, contact the Recycling Hotline at (509) 625-6800.

Chip it



- ▶ Some residents choose to chip their debris. Chippers may be rented or a chipping service hired to take care of your material.
- ▶ Wood chips make excellent mulch around trees and shrubs and can also be used to soften garden paths.

Mulch it



- ▶ By mulching, we can easily put nature's recycling system to work in our own backyard. Spread yard and garden debris around shrubs, trees, and other plantings.
- ▶ Mulching keeps the soil loose and moist, smothers weeds, prevents soil loss, and releases nutrients as it decomposes.

Recycle it



- ▶ "Grasscycling" utilizes a special mulching lawn mower, designed to chop the grass finely and return the clippings to the soil.
- ▶ Grass clippings break down quickly into a natural fertilizer and will not cause thatch.
- ▶ Consider updating to a mulching mower to eliminate the need for grass clipping disposal.

There are safer and healthier options for handling yard and garden debris other than burning.

Residential Yard and Garden Debris **Frequently Asked Questions**

What is residential yard and garden debris?

Residential yard and garden debris (garden trimmings, tree clippings, lawn rakings, dry leaves and needles) originates on the maintained, improved area* of residential property (i.e., lands immediately adjacent to a residence) and burned on such lands by the property owner and/or any other responsible person.

** The area within about 30 feet of a residence is generally, but not always, an "improved area." The "maintained/improved area" is an area that often consists of a lawn that is mowed and watered 2-3 times or more per week. There are often a few trees, shrubs, or other vegetation planted within this area as part of a designed landscape around the house or outbuilding. If unsure, contact Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency (509) 477-4727.*

Why is outdoor burning being reduced?

Burning natural vegetation emits harmful smoke particles and chemicals similar to cigarette smoke. Fine particles damage the lungs, affecting respiratory and cardiovascular functions. Microscopic particles remain suspended in the air for long periods and over large distances, affecting neighboring areas. As rural areas become more populated, more people are impacted by smoke. Alternatives to burning this type of debris are becoming more available and accepted. For these reasons, burning is being phased-out in urban growth areas across Washington State.

Do fire districts permit outdoor burning?

Some fire districts have been delegated outdoor burning programs. Once you've determined that you are eligible to burn, and if you reside within Fire Districts 2, 5, 11, or 12, contact your district directly for burn permit information.

What about recreational/cooking fires?

Cooking and recreational fires, such as barbecues, chimneys and other patio/deck warmers, are allowed year-round, as long as approved fuel is used: clean/dry firewood, briquettes, natural gas, or propane. Approved campfires at designated places in parks and campgrounds are also allowed, except during a burn ban. Burn barrels are prohibited. Disposal of vegetation waste in a recreational fire is also prohibited.

May I burn natural vegetation from my acreage, beyond my improved yard?

Trees, limbs, etc., located on acreage beyond your improved yard area is silvicultural material. Depending upon where you live, you may be eligible to burn this type of debris under the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permit or rule burn. For details, call DNR at (509) 684-7474.

What options are there for handling my yard and garden debris?

Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency encourages residents who live in areas where burning is still allowed to choose healthier and safer options other than burning. Instead, consider composting, mulching, and chipping your yard waste. It can add beauty to landscaping, while protecting you, your family, and your neighbors from unnecessary exposure to smoke.

Campfires



If you have more questions about campfires, contact the Department of Natural Resources, Northeast Region, in Colville at (509) 684-7474 or visit their website at www.dnr.wa.gov

No burning is allowed on state land except in designated campgrounds.



Burning of any material, except firewood, is prohibited.

BURNING MAY NOT OCCUR DURING AN OUTDOOR BURNING BAN

Bans issued by the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, based on air quality, are reported on its webpage, or by calling the Burn Information Hotline at **(509) 477-4710**

Fire marshals and other officials may also ban burning based on fire danger. You need to check with local fire officials.

Never leave a campfire unattended.
Even a small breeze can quickly cause the fire to spread. The fire must be attended at all times by a person capable of extinguishing it quickly.

Completely extinguish the fire.
Drown the fire with water. Make sure all embers, coals, and sticks are wet. Move rocks—there may be burning embers underneath. Keep a charged garden hose or 2 five-gallon buckets of water and a shovel or rake on hand at all times.

Keep the campfire small.
A good bed of coals or a small fire surrounded by rocks gives plenty of heat.

Clean, no dirt fire.
Dry fuel burns hot, clean and quick. Avoid burning wet, woody debris. A clean fire creates less smoke.



Clear a firebreak around your campfire that is free of flammable material. The rule of thumb is **1.5 times** the height of the campfire.

4.5 FEET OR MORE

3 FEET FIRE WIDTH

25 FEET

The fire should be **25 feet** away from any structure or standing timber.

Recreational Fires



If you have more questions about outdoor burning or any other air quality topic, contact the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, (509) 477-4727 or visit their website at www.spokanecleanair.org

Recreational fires must be no larger than 3 feet in diameter.

The fire cannot be used as a disposal fire—i.e., paper, natural vegetation/yard debris, garbage, etc.—cannot be burned.

The only legal fuel to burn is charcoal, natural gas, propane and firewood.

The wood must be dry, clean, and natural (untreated) wood or manufactured logs.



BURNING MAY NOT OCCUR DURING AN OUTDOOR BURNING BAN

Bans issued by the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, based on air quality, are reported on its webpage, or by calling the Burn Information Hotline at **(509) 477-4710**

Fire marshals and other officials may also ban burning based on fire danger. You need to check with local fire officials.

Be considerate of your neighbors.

Don't burn on days when air quality is deteriorating—usually on calm days with little ventilation.

The fire must be attended at all times by a person capable of extinguishing it quickly.

Clean, no-dirt fire.

Dry fuel burns hot, clean and quick. Avoid burning wet, woody debris. A clean fire creates less smoke.

The fire must not cause a nuisance to your neighbors (i.e., excessive smoke and odors traveling onto their property).

Clear a firebreak around your campfire that is free of flammable material. The rule of thumb is **1.5 times** the height of the campfire.

**3 FEET
FIRE WIDTH**

The fire should be **10 feet away** from any structure or standing timber.



There may be other local rules that apply to your use of recreational type fire, such as homeowner association covenants, rental agreements, fire protection issues, etc.



Regulations for Silvicultural Burning on Unimproved* Property

JURISDICTION OF THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

No permit is required if the burn meets ALL of the following criteria (Rule Burn):

- ▶ Only one pile, less than 4 feet across, may be burning at a time.
- ▶ The pile may only consist of clean, natural vegetation, free of dirt.
- ▶ The burn pile must be 50 feet away from any structure, standing timber, or power lines.
- ▶ Winds are calm or light and do not exceed 7 to 10 miles per hour.
- ▶ At least one person who is capable of putting out the fire and has the means to call 9-1-1 must be in attendance at all times.
- ▶ The firebreak is clear and free of flammable material, to bare soil.
- ▶ A shovel, and a charged hose or 5 gallons of water.

A permit is required when any one of the conditions listed cannot be met. The permit fee is based on the estimated fuel. At time of printing, the permit fee for piles up to 100 tons is \$25.50.

Find a burn permit fee schedule in the **Business and Permits** area of www.dnr.wa.gov.

Call DNR's Northeast Regional Office in Colville at **(509) 684-7474** to acquire a burn permit. Allow up to two weeks for the permit.

Keep your fire safe and legal
DNR investigates and pursues recovery of all reasonable expenses for wildfires started through negligence on DNR-protected lands. Follow your permit to stay safe and legal.

*** What is unimproved property?**

Lands that are not irrigated, mowed, or otherwise maintained including timbered pastures, brush lands, scrub forests, and forests.

Silvicultural Burning



If you have more questions about silvicultural burning, contact the Department of Natural Resources, Northeast Region, in Colville at (509) 684-7474 or visit their website at www.dnr.wa.gov

Rule Burn

A FIRE THAT DOES NOT REQUIRE A PERMIT



4 feet or less

Not more than one burn pile at a time.



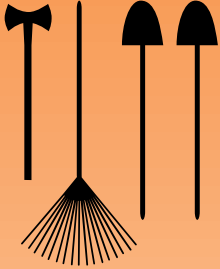
NO MORE THAN ONE PILE

Permit Burn

A PERMIT IS REQUIRED IF THE PILE EXCEEDS REQUIREMENTS ALLOWED BY THE RULE BURN

Burn only when winds are calm or light, and do not exceed 7-10 miles per hour.

TIP Dry fuel burns hot, clean, and quick. Avoid burning wet debris. A clean fire creates less smoke.



Keep shovels, axes and a rake on site.

At least one person who is capable of putting the fire out must be in attendance at all times, with a means to contact 9-1-1 if needed.



Keep sufficient tools and water available.

See permit for specific recommendations and requirements.

Burning of any material, except natural vegetation from unimproved property, is prohibited.



RULE BURN

Burn pile must be 50 feet away from any structure, standing timber, or power lines. Burns must be 500 feet from logging slash. Contact DNR offices for more details.

PERMITTED BURN

A permit is required if the pile exceeds requirements allowed by the Rule Burn.

The pile must be clean, natural vegetation, free of dirt.

Frequently Asked Questions



What can be burned?

No matter what type of fire you're planning, it is legal to burn only natural vegetation or firewood. It is against the law to burn anything else — even paper (except for the amount necessary to start a fire).



NO

Can construction and demolition debris be burned?

It is illegal to burn any material resulting from a construction, renovation, or demolition project.



NO

Can burn barrels be used?

No, the use of burn barrels is prohibited statewide.



NO

When is burning considered a nuisance?

Smoke, odor, or ash that unreasonably impacts neighboring properties is illegal. Call Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, **(509) 477-4727**, to report all smoke-related complaints.

What about land clearing burning?

In Spokane County, limited land clearing debris burning may be allowed for residential (not commercial) land clearing on one acre or less for building a house on property that is 5 acres or larger. The other type of land clearing debris burning that may be allowed is when property owners are converting a silvicultural (forested) area into an agricultural operation. For additional details and rules, contact the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency at **(509) 477-4727**.

Other Resources

Outdoor Burning in Spokane County (except Silvicultural)

Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency

(509) 477-4727 (office)

(509) 477-4710

(24-hr Burn Info Line)

www.spokanecleanair.org/outdoor_burning.asp

Silvicultural Debris Burning in Eastern Washington

Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Northeast Region, in Colville:

(509) 684-7474

Outdoor Burning in Eastern Washington (outside Spokane County)

Washington State Department of Ecology, Eastern Region Office

(509) 329-3400

Composting, Recycling, Waste Reduction and Disposal

Spokane Regional Solid Waste System

(509) 625-6800



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

Doug Sutherland - Commissioner of Public Lands

www.dnr.wa.gov

NORTHEAST REGION

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